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Front Edit Other
Page Page Page

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'Foreign Service Officer Says Overseas Programs Assert Leadership Of U.S.

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Coordination of foreign affairs services of the many United States agencies

abroad becomes more difficult as time goes by, a 22-year-veteran U.S. State Department foreign service officer observed Wednesday in Portland.

However, Byron Blankinship, who grew up in Tigard, believes that these ever-increasing agencies that have grown up since World War II have rebuilt Western Europe and saved that portion of the globe from the encircling effects of Communist aggression.

BLANKINSHIP, home on leave, departs from Portland next week for his new assignment — deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Prague, Czechoslovakia. As such he will rank second to the ambassador.

Speaking to members of the Oregon Executives at a luncheon meeting at the New Heathman Hotel, Blankinship noted that the advent of World War II saw a metamorphosis of the United States from an isolationist country to that of leader of the free world.

Prior to World War II, Blankinship noted, U.S. for-

ign service chiefly evolved from the secretary of state in Washington, D.C., to the embassies and consulates in foreign countries.

However, after the war came the Marshall Plan and many other economic aid groups as well as the Central Intelligence Agency, the United States Information Agency and other governmental agencies that changed the entire concept of the U.S. foreign service, the speaker said.

"So, when a person now says he's in foreign service he must qualify his statement," the speaker noted.

DESPITE the purported bureaucracy this has brought about, Blankinship feels that the U.S. has made "great headway" in selecting the best

qualified people for foreign service duty. And he says the foreign service is constantly being improved and upgraded.

"The State Department and other agencies have put a force into the field that is second to none," he believes.

Blankinship returned to the U.S. recently after completing more than two years as consul general in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

He said that Holland is one example of a small European nation that American aid helped to rebuild.

As a result, he believes, the number of Communists in that country have been reduced greatly and America enjoys a position second to none in the hearts of the Dutch people.

Referring to the death of President Kennedy, Blankinship said that for several days after the assassination long lines of Dutch people lined up at the consulate to sign the condolence book.

The Netherlands, like the other countries of Western Europe, has become a heavily industrialized nation since World War II, much of which can be credited basically to Marshall Plan aid.